

by Julie Mais
Editor



Woven stronger

On the mantel in my home sits a piece of coiled rope. No one would call me up for interior decorating advice — I just fill my home with meaningful pieces. Each time I look at that rope, I'm reminded of where it came from and where I came from.

That piece of rope is from an old barn on my grandparents' land that was a backdrop for much of my childhood memories: fishing at the nearby pond, helping my grandpa put up hay in the loft, watching my dad harvest beans in the field to the east of it and deer hunting in the tree line to the north.

The barn is no longer in use, and the loft is no longer very safe to be in. Years ago, however, I was able to snag part of the rope that hung idle for decades and give it a new home.

It's strong and hefty — it had to be. First used to pull a World War II-era glider from the air force base about 20 miles away, a lucky mistake from the operators releasing the rope from both ends landed it in my grandpa's hayfield.

The rope soon found its new purpose attached to hayforks and a pulley in the hayloft to bring up the loose hay. It was retired when a hay baler and elevator took on its load.

Strength was required to do both of those important tasks. How can one trust a mere rope? Looking at

the cut end of that rope offers insight into the individual fibers woven together. Each on their own, that rope would have surely snapped, but together they were strong enough to do the job that was required.

Better together


Angus breeders recently met for the Angus Convention and 139th Annual Convention of Delegates in Salt Lake City, Utah. While it was a celebration of another successful year, no one shied away from current difficulties the industry is facing.

Angus breeders and their customers in the drought-stricken parts of the country are having to make tough decisions. Labor challenges and high input costs are putting pressures on even the areas that have had sufficient moisture. But demand for Angus cattle remains strong, and it's expected for profitability to swing toward the cow-calf producer.

Witnessing more than 1,300 Angus breeders and industry partners come together reminds me of that

rope sitting on my mantel. Keeping cattlemen independent matters. But individuals, when woven together, create something stronger. Together, we as an industry can face those challenges ahead.

You can find more on the Angus Convention in the January *Angus Journal*, and tune in to *The Angus Conversation* this month to hear from some of the panelists talking about the future of the beef industry, marketing and what consumers are really wanting.

On behalf of the *Angus Journal* team, we hope you have a merry Christmas. 

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie".

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